

Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel claims 2, 3, 12, and 13 without prejudice.

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A multimedia information playback apparatus comprising:

first input means for receiving multimedia information including video data and audio data distributed from a first distribution source, wherein the first distribution source comprises a storage device for storing the multimedia information, and wherein a user side comprises the first distribution source;

second input means for receiving control information distributed from a second distribution source, wherein the second distribution source comprises a network server for distributing the control information; and

playback means for playing back the multimedia information received by said first input means on the basis of the control information received by said second input means, and wherein the playback means plays back the multimedia information which is distributed from the storage device and received by said first input means, on the basis of the control information which is distributed from the network server and received by said second input means.

2. (cancelled)

3. (cancelled)

4. (currently amended) ~~An~~ The apparatus ~~according to~~ of claim 1, wherein ~~a storage device for storing the multimedia information and the control information, and a network server for distributing the control information are respectively arranged as the first and second distribution sources, said~~ the playback means has a first playback mode in which said playback means plays back the multimedia information which is distributed from the storage device and received by said first input means, on the basis of the control information which is distributed from the storage device and received by said second input means, and wherein the ~~a second playback mode in which said playback means plays back of~~ the multimedia information which is distributed from the storage device and received by said first input means, on the basis of the control information which is distributed from the network server and received by said second input means by the said playback means is a second playback mode, and the apparatus further comprises switching means for switching a playback mode to either one of the first and second playback modes.

5. (currently amended) ~~An~~ The apparatus ~~according to~~ of claim 4, wherein said switching means comprises:

authentication means for authenticating the network server upon reception of a switching request signal from a user; and

means for switching the playback mode of said playback means to the second playback mode when said authentication means authenticates the network server as an authentic network server.

6. (currently amended) ~~An~~ The apparatus ~~according to~~ of claim 4, wherein said playback means comprises:

a first navigator unit for reading out the control information in the storage device by said second input means in the first playback mode, analyzing the readout control information, and

controlling read of the multimedia information in the storage device in accordance with an analysis ~~result~~,result; and

a second navigator unit for controlling read of the multimedia information in the storage device on the basis of the control information distributed from the network server in the second playback mode.

7. (currently amended) ~~An~~The apparatus ~~of~~according to claim 31, wherein the network server generates group management information for managing a plurality of users having similar personal information as one group and generates, based on the group management information, for controlling playback of the multimedia information, and wherein the playback means plays back the multimedia information based on the generated control information.

8. (currently amended) ~~An~~The apparatus ~~according to~~of claim 31, wherein said playback means comprises determination means for, when change operation of the control information by a user is detected during playback of the multimedia information, determining whether to receive the change operation, in accordance with personal information of the user, and when said determination means determines that the change operation of the control information is receivable, said playback means plays back the multimedia information on the basis of the control information changed in accordance with user operation.

9. (currently amended) ~~An~~The apparatus ~~of~~according to claim 31, wherein the network server distributes multimedia information of digital broadcasting having a plurality of channels, and said playback means plays back multimedia information of a channel corresponding to the control information.

10. (currently amended) ~~An~~The apparatus ~~according to~~of claim 31, wherein the control information contains a program for checking user operation contents, and when user operation is detected during playback of the multimedia information, said playback means executes the program, and plays back multimedia information corresponding to the user operation contents.

11. (currently amended) A multimedia information playback method comprising:

~~the~~ a first step of receiving multimedia information having video data and audio data distributed from a first distribution source; wherein the first distribution source comprises a storage device for storing the multimedia information, and wherein a user side comprises the first distribution source;

~~the~~ a second step of receiving control information distributed from a second distribution source, wherein the second distribution source comprises a network server for distributing the control information; and

~~the~~ a third step of playing back the multimedia information received by execution of the first step on the basis of the control information received by execution of the second step and wherein the third step comprises a fourth step of playing back the multimedia information which is distributed from the storage device and received by execution of the first step, on the basis of the control information which is distributed from the network server and received by execution of the second step.

12. (cancelled).

13. (cancelled).

14. (currently amended) A ~~The method according to~~ claim 11, wherein a storage device for storing the multimedia information and the control information, and a network server for distributing the control information are respectively arranged as the first and second distribution sources, the third step comprises;

~~the sixth~~ a fifth ~~step of playing back the multimedia information which is distributed from the storage device and received by execution of the first step, on the basis of the control~~

information which is distributed from the storage device and received by execution of the second step;; and

~~the seventh~~a sixth step of playing back the multimedia information which is distributed from the storage device and received by execution of the first step, on the basis of the control information which is distributed from the network server and received by execution of the second step;; and

the method further comprises ~~the eighth~~a seventh step of executing either one of the ~~sixth~~fifth and ~~sixth~~seventh steps.

15. (currently amended) A-The method ~~according to~~of claim 14, wherein the ~~eighth~~seventh step comprises:

~~the ninth~~an eighth step of authenticating the network server upon reception of a switching request signal from a user; and

~~the 10th~~a ninth step of executing the ~~seventh~~sixth step when the network server is authenticated as an authentic network server on the basis of execution of the ~~ninth~~eighth step.

16. (currently amended) A-The method ~~of~~according to claim 14, wherein the third step comprises:

~~the 11th~~an eighth step of reading out the control information in the storage device on the basis of execution of the second step in executing the ~~sixth~~fifth step, analyzing the readout control information, and controlling read of the multimedia information in the storage device in accordance with an analysis result; and

~~the 12th~~ a ninth step of controlling read of the multimedia information in the storage device on the basis of the control information distributed from the network server in executing the ~~seventh~~ sixth step.

17. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method ~~according to~~ of claim ~~13~~ 11, wherein the network server comprises:

~~the 13th~~ a first step of generating group management information for managing a plurality of users having similar personal information as one group and generating, based on the group management information, the control information for controlling playback of the multimedia information; and

wherein the third step comprises ~~the 14th~~ a fifth step of playing back the multimedia information on the basis of the control information generated by execution of the ~~13th~~ first step of the network server.

18. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method ~~according to~~ of claim ~~13~~ 11, wherein the third step comprises:

~~the 15th~~ a fifth step of, when change operation of the control information by a user is detected during playback of the multimedia information, determining whether to receive the change operation, in accordance with personal information of the user; and

~~the 16th~~ a sixth step of, when the change operation of the control information is determined to be receivable by execution of the ~~15th~~ fifth step, playing back the multimedia information on the basis of the control information changed in accordance with user operation.

19. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method ~~according to~~ of claim ~~13~~ 11, wherein the network server comprises:

~~the 17th~~ a first step of distributing multimedia information of digital broadcasting having a plurality of channels; and

the third step comprises ~~the 18th~~ a fifth step of playing back multimedia information of a channel corresponding to the control information.

20. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method according to ~~claim 13~~ claim 11, wherein the control information includes a program for checking user operation contents, and the third step comprises ~~the 19th~~ a fifth step of, when user operation is detected during playback of the multimedia information, executing the program, and playing back multimedia information corresponding to the user operation contents.

21. (currently amended) A multimedia information playback apparatus, comprising:

a first input unit configured to receive multimedia information during use, wherein the multimedia information comprises video data and audio data distributed from a first distribution source, wherein the first distribution source comprises a storage device for storing the multimedia information, and wherein a user side comprises the first distribution source;

a second input unit configured to receive control information during use, wherein the control information comprises information distributed from a second distribution source, wherein the second distribution source comprises a network server for distributing the control information; and

a playback unit configured to play back multimedia information received by the first input unit based on control information received by the second input unit during use, wherein the multimedia information is distributed from the storage device, and wherein the control information is distributed from the network server.

22. (currently amended) A multimedia information playback method, comprising:

receiving multimedia information, wherein the multimedia information comprises video data and audio data distributed from a first distribution source, wherein the first distribution source comprises a storage device for storing the multimedia information, and wherein a user side comprises the first distribution source;

receiving control information, wherein the control information is distributed from a second distribution source, wherein the second distribution source comprises a network server for distributing the control information; and

playing back the received multimedia information based on the received control information, wherein the multimedia information is distributed from the storage device, and wherein the control information is distributed from the network server.

23. (new) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first distribution source is a DVD-ROM.
24. (new) The method of claim 11, wherein the first distribution source is a DVD-ROM.
25. (new) The method of claim 22, wherein the first distribution source is a DVD-ROM.